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*Adm 113*

*ADM-173*

Executive Registry  
168-5281

DD/ST# 4631-68

29 November 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: The Lindsay Group Report

1. On Sunday, 24 November I attended the final meeting of Frank Lindsay's study group on intelligence which is functioning under [redacted] The [redacted] 25X1 purpose of the meeting was to discuss the final draft of their report. In addition to most members of the panel (list of members attached -- [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] was present in his capacity as Executive Director of the work of the various study groups which have been appointed by President-Elect Nixon to study various aspects of the Government, including the organization of the Executive Branch. Mr. Lindsay gave me the final draft of the paper to read before the meeting which convened at 1800 hours. He then invited my comments. These and the ensuing discussion went on until approximately 2130 hours. Important points covered in the paper and the discussion are substantially as follow.

a. The paper starts with a strong recommendation that Mr. Helms continue as DCI.

b. The paper contains a number of recommendations that add up to the need for continuation of substantially the existing arrangements for policy control over the operational activities of the Agency. The need for a member of the White House staff with particular cognizance over CIA matters was stressed. This, I gathered, referred to the duties contemplated for a Special Assistant for National Security Affairs.

c. The paper makes the point that intelligence collection can create as much trouble for the Government as covert operations and that arrangements for supervision of CIA

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should include both. It also recommends that the DCI be requested to submit a draft directive for Presidential issuance establishing the general scope and pace appropriate for the over-all Agency effort. After some discussion I think that the panel recognized that covert activity must necessarily be regarded as an ingredient of the over-all policies and programs of the Government in specific areas and the scope and pace of this effort cannot be established in isolation from decisions on other Government programs.

d. Covert operations and clandestine collection activity should remain together. Some sentiment was expressed for splitting the estimating process off from the Agency and giving it to the State Department. 25)

both favored this on what, to me at least, seemed rather curious grounds -- that the co-location of this function with the other functions of the Agency contaminated the estimating machinery and made it difficult to obtain appropriate support from consultants or to recruit new people to serve as estimators. After some discussion about the importance of the Board of National Estimates in formulating military estimates and the need for a respected and objective interagency tribunal in this connection, 25) withdrew his objections and voted with the majority to support the present organizational arrangements of the Agency. 25)

e. I believe that the panel also accepted the thought that controls over the Agency should be positive as well as negative. 25) picked this point up when I suggested it and argued strongly in favor of the need for some language in the report to the effect that those exercising policy control over the Agency should be admonished to regard it as a valuable instrument, the potentialities of which should be thoroughly understood and exploited positively.

f. There was considerable language in the report about Defense intelligence activities, all of which struck me as somewhat fuzzy and inconclusive. It all had to do with the need for rationalizing Defense intelligence programs and

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eliminating duplication, etc. As drafted the paper suggested that the possibility of a giant agency (comparable to NSA) be established to run all technical intelligence activities in the Defense Department. It was agreed that this recommendation should be eliminated, and that the paper should simply note that supervision and coordination of military intelligence (technical and otherwise) is a problem and that arrangements for this purpose in DoD should be reviewed. It was also agreed that the paper would refer to the fact that careful and searching reviews of this problem had already been completed or were underway.

g. The paper concluded with a theoretical discussion of covert action programs and of the need for an answer to the problem of how to fund [redacted]

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[redacted] should also be identified as candidates for funding.

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2. The meeting concluded with some discussion about what to do with the report. [redacted] undertook to see that it went to the new President with an appropriate covering letter. He also undertook to arrange to see that it went to appropriate new officials of the Government. It was then suggested that the paper should be given rather broader dissemination to interested people in the universities, etc., and my opinion was asked as to whether broader dissemination of the paper would embarrass the Agency or the Government. I said that I couldn't see much in the paper that had not already been the subject of very considerable public discussion and that I thought some general recognition of the fact that the Agency had the support of such a distinguished group would be very much to our advantage. The reaction to this was an immediate general retreat. Several members simultaneously expressed their strong reluctance to being publicly identified with the conclusions of a report which endorses intelligence activity, and I suspect that dissemination of the report will in fact be severely limited.

JOHN A. BROSS  
D/DCI/NIPE

cc: DDCI

ExDir-Comptroller

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